

Indexed Transcript

Narrator: Rook Hine

Interviewer: Ty Bolduc

Interview	Code
<p>Ty: Today is November 20th, 2022, and it is 6:05 p.m.. I'm here at Payson Smith Hall on the University of Southern Maine campus in Portland. My name is Ty Bolduc. T-Y B-O-L-D-U-C</p> <p>Rook: And that's, I'm the interviewee subject. My name is Rook Hine. First name R-O-O-K. Last name H-I-N-E. Middle name Ambatjoglos. A-M-B-A-T-J-O-G-L-O-S.</p> <p>Ty: Alright, and I just want to remind you that you are welcome to decline any question. You can end the interview whenever you'd like.</p> <p>Rook: Absolutely.</p> <p>Ty: And if after about 90 minutes, you feel like you have so much to say, you're welcome to set up another time to chat. And I can set all of that up for you.</p> <p>Rook: Very good. I may cry out for mercy at a certain point if I'm feeling too nicotine deprived or in need of a pee break.</p> <p>Ty: Yes, absolutely. Alright to start. What language do you use to identify yourself, for example-?</p> <p>Rook: English.</p> <p>Ty: English? Yes.</p> <p>Rook: Native speaker. My primary, has been for.</p> <p>Ty: Do you consider yourself gay, lesbian, non-binary, genderqueer?</p> <p>Rook: Well, I mean, you're asking me about a couple of different things.</p> <p>Ty: Yes.</p>	<p>Date Location</p> <p>Language</p>

Rook: In terms of my queer identities, in terms of what we would call LGBTQ+ or what we would term MOGAI, I am, my orientation is pansexual. I am also queer, identified. I have at times identified bi, as bi. I have also at times identified myself as a gay and lesbian. I may continue to do so in the future, regardless of which orientation I'm feeling in a given moment. I often joke that, well, my family literally comes from Lesbos, my grandfather's side, so I am a lesbian through many means and was settled before I even came out with regards to my gender aspects. With regards to those gender aspects I identify currently as well genderqueer, trans-feminine, non-binary. I yeah. I traditionally identified as metagender, which was a term that I thought I was the first one coming up with. It turns out there's a couple of other people who can lay some claim to it, but I may be first in time, even though I don't use that term anymore. I have some parentage claim towards it. But yeah, that's, that's the basics of that portion of identity.

Queer Identities

Ty: Great, and what pronouns do you prefer?

Pronouns

Rook: I use they/them. I use ze/hir or ze/zir. I use she/her as well, at this point in my life. That was, that was the last one to be adopted. But, finally, took me, it took me a while to accept my femme-ness. But once I did, it took me a bit to be like, yes, I'll take a she/her. But.

Ty: And how old are you?

Age

Rook: I am currently 47 years old. And some months.

Ty: And where were you born?

Birthplace

Rook: Hartford, Connecticut.

Ty: And did you grow up there?

Growing up Location

Rook: In Hartford and outside of Hartford. Within Connecticut was primarily where I grew up. Yeah, I, I can go further in depth on, on my, on my basis. Let me see. As I said, on my grandfather's side, I'm a lesbian on my grandmother's side. On that side, which is the Greek side, my mother's side. My grandmother was a descendant of refugees from Smyrna, which is nowadays known as Izmir. After, after World War Two, the Greco Turkish War, there was displacement and the Great Fire, and my grandmother emigrated around that time. My grandfather had emigrated in 1929. Yeah, good timing. I would say. When he was 17, he, his, his father's father had, had been a mercenary, actually, who fought with Teddy Roosevelt at the, at the Battle of

Ancestry

San Juan Hill, and therefore sort of won one citizenship and won it for his kids. And therefore, that was how my grandfather and his family ended up living there. And then on my dad's side, it's just sort of WASPy Euro-mutt, a long term American family, my grandmother's side there lead to the [inaudible] out of Baltimore. So they had like money on that side. And my grandfather on that side was an academic. But, and, my dad came, he was a, both my grandfathers were in World War Two and my, my grandfather, my dad's side stayed in the service for a full 20. He was a Navy flier. And my dad was, was therefore sort of a Navy brat, moved to, constantly for the first 14 years of his life, but ended up in, in Huntington, Long Island. And then my grandfather was working for Grumman at that point, helped to design the the lunar lander. But so that was, that was my, my dad's upbringing was, was on Long Island. My mom, the family came to Astoria out of New York, ended up in Hartford and New Britain, which is where they, where they came across my grandmother. They were married when my grandfather was on leave. He, he served in Italy and North Africa. But at any rate, a long, long ways to come around to being like both of them were, had fairly typical sort of suburban upbringings. My mom in West Hartford, Connecticut, and then my, my dad out of Long Island. The two of them that at Bates. Maine is the connection for my dad, because my dad had lived at Brunswick with the NAS and also his mom. My grandmother had, had land on Lake Sebago, which had formerly been a summer camp. Like her, her grandfather had built a summer camp on the shores of Sebago. So there was a compound in Maine that was like sort of the one constant place in my dad's life. So that was sort of the connection with Maine. Then, of course, my dad went to Bates, my mom went to Bates. They meet at Bates. They do this really like both of them knew they were cishet so hard type thing where they get married at age 20. Yeah. And they do their path together. My dad ends up going to medical school down at Johns Hopkins. My mom graduates early. She's synchronized with my dad and then goes down there and works in the Baltimore schools while my dad goes, he goes to med school. They, they do that, that thing for a few years. '74 comes along and Mom ends up knocked up with me. I was conceived in Baltimore. I always tell people my connection to that city. But yeah, '75 I come along and I was the first born. And they were both 25, which is absurdly young from my perspective, has only seemed more and more so the older that I've gotten. But of course, coming up, it was normative for me that they should be like, "oh yeah, yeah. 25. That's not young. It's kids who are having kids when they're 16. Those are young parents."

Ty: And you said you were the firstborn. Did you have any siblings?

Rook: One of each. My sister came along in 1977, 19 months after me. We're not quite Irish twins, but we were pretty close in terms of coming up. And my brother as

Father's past

Mother's past

Parents meeting at Bates

Young parents

Siblings

well, we were also closer when he was bit younger. He was in '79, so we were spaced out with the three of us. And as it turns out, of course they got one of each, but wouldn't know so for decades, so to speak. But.

Ty: Did you and your siblings get along very well?

Rook: Um, for the most part, yeah. I, I mean, coming up, I, we, we lived in, you know, the various suburbs of, of Hartford, mostly in Marlborough by the time we were three until I was about 12 and then Glastonbury from then through all of high school. My parents ended up moving, you know, later on after I was gone, what have you. But yeah, I get along well with my siblings and with my parents too. For the most part. There was definite conflict, some of which came to a head at different points in particularly and and different people. But there is a large difference between my siblings and myself. Of course. I was very much the odd one out in a lot of levels and I started figuring that out very early on. I you know, I didn't want for anything much in terms of material, in terms of my upbringing and my parents were, um, you know, they were, considering the period of like the late seventies and the early eighties. They were about as socially liberal as I could hope for, given their circumstance. I mean, not excessively so, but to the point of like where I would say that most of them, if you'd asked them, you know, are you a feminist? They would say, Yeah, sure, you know. But holding on at the same time to a lot of like, dare I say, boomer mentalities of like, "Well, of course we didn't question this. Why would we question this? This is reality. What do you mean there are people this doesn't apply?" I, I developed PTSD fairly early on, and it's not as strong of a case where I can list and look at like X is the traumatizing event. See, sometimes the lucky people like, you know, it's like, oh yeah, it's completely plain what traumatized me and what have you. There are things I can point at. My dad, though he never used this word to define himself, was an alcoholic. Alcoholism and my family's relationship with alcohol were one of those things like queerness in my family. That would be a major theme that wouldn't really become cognizant until later on in my life when I started piecing things together in terms of the differences, as we do, I think when we begin to come to define things. But when I was six, there was a very bad snowstorm. Um, there had been a fire, not the night of when it occurred. But about a month or a couple of weeks, the times, of course, I was six, I'm not sure. But at my aunt's house there'd been a fire and my aunt and uncle and their two kids had all gotten out. The dog wook them up and the dog died. So, you know, that was bad, but the four of them sort of trundled over to our house and been dropped in and were in their kind of traumatic state of being. And I was a sensitive kid and picked up somewhat on what was going on with that. And I was a little heightened myself. As I said, there was an evening with a bad snowstorm and I don't know how it started, but I know that I was

Odd one out

PTSD/Alcoholism

sick. I assume that probably others in the house were sick too, because of this, 6 year old, that probably means the whole household has come down with something. And I was sick enough to need like, medication in the middle of the night. And, you know, my dad was a doctor, so, you know. But the two of them had been fighting something fierce. I would find out later, years or years later, that my dad had cheated on my mom and they, because he had thought that she was cheating on him. It was this whole huge thing. And they had had like one of the more serious fights, but I had witnessed part of it. But what I really remember, what it burned on to me. It was coming down to the kitchen, my dad coming to get medication and like looking at my mom and then just like go like the expression changing, going to assault, stopping and going into the other room, trundling out of the house. That was one thing that I can point towards where it's like, "okay, that was a traumatic event," and I can point to. A lot of severe bullying. I mean, it sounds prosaic, but eighties bullying was another layer of "I'm being assaulted. If I strike back, I will get in trouble for striking back. But if I'm telling people that I'm being bullied, well, 'how do you expect of it to get past it if you don't fight for yourself?'" I was big. I was a big kid. I'm still a big person, but I was much bigger than other people my age from a very early age. And people thought that I was older than I was. I was very bright. I taught myself how to write and read when I was before I went to school and my parents loved that about me. And showered that aspect of me and like, you know, intelligence. Intelligence is reward. And they didn't seem to notice that I had no concept of how to relate to other kids, that I could talk to adults with perfect acuity. But, you know, around other kids I did not know how to relate to them. And, the not fitting in was like, you know, you got to go to school age. And it's like, boys over here, girls over here. It was like even from early on, I knew I'm like, but it wasn't as simple as like, for me, it wasn't is like, "I'm supposed to be over there with them." It was much more like, "I don't know where I'm supposed to be, but I know I'm not supposed to be in either one of these categories. I appear to be the only one in the world. So what am I going to say about it?" I first developed words of understanding that I was queer in one form or another when I was about eight, um, that was really when I began to apply it, because I was allowed, at my age and in that time and place, long before the internet about what could I do to get knowledge. Well, I was a voracious kid who had an adult intellect, so I got a bloody library card. And, you know, at a certain point I would ask my parents questions. They threw me, you know, like, you know, where did babies come from? Literally the book and were like, here, just read this. Come to us with any questions in that way, of course, of like, of course, I don't come to you with questions. You're really uncomfortable that I asked. But yeah, that was school age me up till I pretty much hit puberty. I was very bright. I had no idea how to relate to other kids. When I tried to interrelate with other kids, they would bully me and eventually I would lash out. Usually with words first. I

Bullying (80s)

Education and Intelligence

Parental Education/ Communication

learned that I can use my words to provoke people and goddamn did I use that once I figured that out. But, you know, there was a presumption amongst a lot of people it's like, oh, you're big, you're a boy so you must be athletic. It's like, no, I know I'm looking at other guys bodies, but I'm like, I don't think I'm developing quite the way you are. It's like the whole upper body thing! Pecs! And I'm like, it's not me, I don't know, but. I know they tried a bunch of stuff. One of the big pivotal events that was another trauma was my grandfather on my mom's side, I was very close to. He was killed while playing golf. He was hit by a train while playing golf. Which was so absurd that it almost, and the circumstance being it was, you know, as I said, it was retired service and they lived in Groton, Connecticut, near the base. There was an officer's club, there was a golf course. There was also a rail spur along the yard where the subs were brought in, what have you. And so the rail spur abutted the golf course. And there was, you know, the everyone's obvious. It's like there's people playing golf through here. They might actually go up on the tracks to retrieve a ball out of the rough. So there's like signs, but someone was blowing through it like 25 and, when they should have been on five, and. And it really was apparently a freak accident. But to my mind, with, with the experience of parents and adults, not always giving the full truth and not really being interested in picking at things that I had a tendency to be like. But what is that under there? I was assured from a fairly early age. Oh, he must have committed suicide. And what had germinated in me was suicidality as well. I had my first ideation a few months after he died, and it wasn't debilitating at that point. It was more coming from isolation and from senses of like, I don't think that I'm supposed to be here. I think this is the wrong place. I think this is the wrong people. I don't know, maybe this is the way out. But it was present from that age.

Ty: How old were you then?

Rook: About nine.

Ty: Nine?

Rook: I first voiced it to a person when I was little, and that had been they tried switching me to a new school. The idea was like, hey, let's let's have him, skip, skip a grade? Of course, I was a him to everyone at that point. Let's skip a grade. He's bright enough to do the test scores better than the test scores of the people in the grade already. Yeah, I'm sure the social thing will catch up. And of course, that was it. I was able to relate to the peers. I was able to try to relate to the peers. The problem is I didn't know what to talk about, and they all seemed to know their roles. So they're like, okay, no, that didn't work. Instead of skipping you ahead and keeping

Athleticism

Grandfather's death

Skipping a Grade

you on, we'll try you in the same grade in a public school. Brutal. Absolutely brutal. I was getting into physical fights when in early adolescence, in junior high. Every day I would be physically attacked in one form or another. And yeah, so that wasn't great.

Public School

Ty: Yeah.

Rook: And all this time, of course, puberty hit me. It hit me hard when I was 11 or so. And I started shooting up and. I had been hopeful. I don't know what I was hopeful for, but I'd been hopeful on some level of my mind that when puberty hit, something different would happen to me. I don't even know what it was. But, but instead I started shooting up in height and it was painful and it was awkward and I didn't know what to do with myself, but I couldn't hide it anymore, literally. And people were so sure of my gender and it was like, okay, I guess I have to own this. So I started learning how to mask. I first started learning how to perform at about that age. I first really got the idea, wait a minute, I could be someone else and play someone else. And that gives me a road through to being someone else. And so I began to focus on acting, and I began to focus on being, like, it's okay. I had my first time playing a woman when I was 13, and that was interesting, to say the least, particularly how I mean, that's one that I can unpack all day in terms of how did I manage to be, into, cast into that role, in particular. But performance was key for me. And very aware throughout that same time together with puberty came, you know, the development of like, oh, crap, I guess that's what that goddamn thing is for. And it appears to want to run my life for me right now, even though I'm not even sure how I feel about it most days. But where I leaned into it, and I'm like, okay, fine. If that's part of it, that's part of it. But I could never, I never could. I never felt honest trying to mask with the cis dudes on any fucking level. And I never was able to with any real success. And what finally ended up happening and what was sort of the turning point for me, because I went through my high school years and I was no longer, you know, the target of all the bullies. I mean, for starters, most bullies had figured out it's like, okay, well, this one is that much taller than me at this point. And of course, I'd learned long ago that the only way to do it was to basically feel no pain and be like, I'm just going to fuck you up as hard as you're fucking me up. And isn't this unpleasant for both of us? Yeah, well, why'd you started. So but I certainly wasn't part of any of the groups. I was definitely just like a weirdo, freak, what have you. And of course, this was the very early nineties that I was in high school. There were no out kids, even in a relatively, you know, oh, we're a little bit ahead of the curve. It's like to be out was a huge act at that time. But I, I pieced it together enough at that point to be like, Oh, okay, so whatever that part is, I'm just into people as far as I can tell, it's not as much the flavor as it is, 'do I click with you on one form or another?' that's going to get me there. And and I didn't express that until there's a

Puberty

Performing Gender/Masking

Performing Arts

Size/Bullying

Relationship to Body

period I'd, um, I was still doing well in school. So I, I didn't study. I just read and retained, but I couldn't get within that system. Well, and of course, the high achievers were having me sort of like, I do enough and I float along and but I ended up at Harvard, for a summer program, and I ended up hanging around with all the street punks in Harvard Square and and clicking really strong with this other kid who was there from a small town outside of Pittsburgh. Two of us fall in love. My first time, not their first time. They would later turn out to be both a they and a trans dude. I would later turn out to be both a they and a trans girl. At the time we weren't sure and she, as she was then, as they were then presenting like I remember to this day, like going off, on like, 'Oh, I have no problem with queer guys. It's, you know, lesbians. I can't stand on them. I can't stand them at all.' But the two of us hooked up. I fell head over heels of course. Of course! And then we both fell in with a charismatic kind of culty guy was about 25, or so he claimed, hanging around, dealing drugs, talking up the younger punk and goth kids and accruing a little bit of a family. For what it's worth, I fell for it fully because I'm like, of course. I was all about magic and vampirism, but what was at its core was a cult, and what the point of the cult was at the end of the day was for that do to get his wa-, his wick went with as many of the girls as possible and. Hm. There's a long and awful story that bores me half to tears in the telling of while it traumatizes me here. But the long and the short of it was that I ran away from home for a brief period and, when I voiced that, I thought that I was bisexual to this dude didn't say anything at first and then was like, 'We have to go do something. Come with me. Here, drink this.' And at the end of that evening, I was in a steam tunnel, disoriented, not knowing what the fuck happened, except that I'd just been raped and. And was pretty sure that I could never, ever tell anyone what happened to me right then. And. So that was kind of the predicate event by which I went back to my family. And. I've gotten into fights with my dad quite a bit through, through those years, and I think that it was partially because he didn't know what to do with me now that I was a large person. My parents never did anything that was like severe physical abuse, but they rather unconsidered lay, were like, 'Oh, of course spanking is different than like physical abuse, you know?' There have been a couple of incidents. My mom, she, like, lost her temper when I was very young and used like a Bobby's, like, nightstick to like bash me around a little bit. It's about the worst that I experienced in terms of physical. But my dad and also doing a few things like broken down the door to my room a few times when I had gone in there, being like, 'I don't want to go,' gotten in conflicts about church. I'd very much made it clear on saying I'm not a believer, and it was important to him that he do so. And I wasn't able to really identify a gender thing as part of it, and that was part of it. But I think that it was part of him trying to be like, 'cause he didn't really know how to teach masculinity, anyway. I would figure this out years later, talking to my brother and talking to my brother's friends, some of whom, you know, read me as a dude at the

Harvard Square
"Street Punks"

First Sexual
Encounter

First Love

Cult

Bisexuality

Sexual Assault

Fights with Father

Mother's Physical
Abuse

Father and Church
Disagreement

Not taught
masculinity

time and like, you know, that your brother doesn't know how to throw a football. I'm like, I don't either. It's not something that my dad ever did. It's really, It's like, yeah. Sorry, sorry, man, I don't know what to tell you. But. A couple of weeks after I'd had come home after that, I was like listening to some music downstairs at the house and my dad told me to turn it down. I turned it down, but it wasn't enough for him. So he came over to where I was listening, grabbed the CD and walked off with it, and I just got pissed and followed him. I was holding a glass of like something in my hand and was like, you know, yelling, you know, give it back, give it back, give it back. And like, I threw it against the chimney that was like exposed brick. I was like, Give it back. He tackles me. I let go of the things I'm like, I don't want and I just want and try, and get away from him. Managed to get away from him. He comes after me again. I get away from him again. I get out of the kitchen, get out a knife. He comes towards me again I say no to come towards me again and going out for a smoke. My mom has called the police by this time so the police come and listen to our accounts of it and of course they arrest me. My first experience, real experience with the police. And that was sort of a hinge point for me. I'd had. I had an attempt, like in the immediate aftermath of being assaulted. I didn't think of it as an attempt. I just thought of it as sure I'm going to take two dozen things of acid. Yeah. And I'm going to hang out on this overpass and see how far I can dangle myself down. Didn't get hurt. Of course I didn't. I had all kinds of toxic shit in my mind, believed fully in the apocalypse. The apocalypse is coming. The apocalypse is imminent. It's already happening, guys, didn't anyone see it? The world is falling shit and all the true people who I can connect with have already been dead. You've already killed all of us, with the few survivors or hiding. That was my mindset as a kid. So that's fresh how I came to the world at age 18 is that. And that's a long ramble and I have no idea how long it even took me to, holy crap, 46 minutes just to get me to 18. Well.

Ty: I do want to ask about the first hookup that you had. You said that it was someone who is now also a queer person. At the time where you both identifying and discussing in a way?

Rook: At the time, as I said. Yeah, Gerra that they at the time they identified as. 'No, no, I'm a woman.' But yeah. It wasn't until years later that I would hear for in order. First of all, 'guess who is now a lesbian who has appeared very phobic against' which would of course be like, oh, of course, which was when we first did the Facebook connection. Is that the advantage of being of my vintage is I've had years of like we hook into each other on social media and then it's like, hey, you too? But, yeah later on would be like, 'Hey, wait a minute, I'm non-binary and trans masc' and yeah, very. We're still in touch. I'm still in touch with most of the people who I knew during my time in my life. And a great number of them were queer too. But. There were happy

Father Fight

First Experience with the Police

Apocalypse

First Hookup, Queer Discussions

Queer people, still in touch

endings amidst it all. But of course, my very dramatic and traumatized little brain didn't know that at the time.

Ty: And you said that you were eight years old when you started to kind of put words to how you were feeling. And how long did it take you to express that to someone?

Rook: In terms of expressing my queerness for the first time?

Ty: Yeah.

Rook: That was the first time was when I was assaulted. The next time after that was. Well, this had all gone down during what was to be my senior year of high school. And it was very much this whole thing of like, you know, well, you know, you need to you need to go back so you can graduate. And of course, my parents had this script of, like, you need college [inaudible]. But. But no. So when I went back for my senior year, I'd, um, I had a few friends who I developed, I, you know, and that's the weird thing for me is like in my internal mind, I was like, I really, I was always alone it was like I was. But I also had friends, which is weird to me at the same time. It was just like even with friends at that time, I felt like I had to mask. But, no, the, the second and third people I told my friend, Mike, who had come out to me as gay which a couple of years earlier and to my response was to that at the time was, 'I know', and I, I figured that was my first moment of like, well, come on, fair is fair, you've got. He told, he went out on a limb and told you you've got to go out on a limb and tell him. So I told Mike and I told my sister, who I knew, you know, we were fairly close friends by that point, although I was more certain than ever of like, okay, I it's weird to me in some level it's like, wait, am I a sister to you or what what it is, I'm not sure. But we've got this strong bond and I'm not going to question it too strongly. And yeah, and I can tell that you're on the level, even though you're distressingly normal and probably going to follow in my parents path and actually went to Bates and not the first person she dated. The, you know, she date, had also dated in high school which apparently neither of my parents did. But yeah, that Corey who was the second person who she dated seriously and it's. Yep they hooked up and had their kids only two not three but and guess where the oldest, my oldest nephling, just, just matriculated this semester. Yeah yeah. So, so yeah. I'm close to my sister. I'm close to my brother too, um, in a different way. But yeah, but they're both so different from me in so many ways.

Ty: Have you always been close or was there, were there rocky patches in those friendships?

First Coming Out Experience

College

Told Friend and Sister

Sister's Life

Close with Siblings?

Rook: There have definitely been rocky patches with both of us. I mean, with Kate, I put her through hell so many times, I put both of them, I put everyone I loved through hell at some times, I'm an alcoholic, you know, it's like that's kind of what we do, you know? But, no I mean, Kate and I have had furious arguments at points, but we've usually hashed things out. And yeah, the big arguments have really come like the truly epochal ones actually did come after I transitioned and it's like, Oh, okay, so now I'm in the real you and mom. And this is the dynamic of the women, in this, in this family. Oh, okay. Oh, and yeah. Yeah.

Ty: So it sounds like your sister reacted fairly good to you coming out when you first did. How did the rest of your family respond?

Rook: Oh, no, my parents ignored it. Um, yeah. The first several times that I came out to them, they ignored it. And it wasn't until I literally took and brought a guy who I was dating in my my last year of college home and the two of us fucked in my bedroom, loud enough for, for other people to hear that. It's like, Oh, okay, good. That got it through. Good. It was the WASPy reaction portion of like, you know, we don't talk to you about it. And I think that was part partially because they had they had come to believe that I was doing things for attention. Or if you give a credence, you know, that's why I want what they want from you type of thing. What have you. But yeah, but yeah, I'd, um, I come out to most of my peer group by the time I ended up in college, I did a year at the University of Connecticut 'cause, I got in grade. I did great on my SATs back when that was a mandatory thing, and I got a National Merit Scholarship to the PSATs. And it was the thing at the time in Connecticut of like if you hit that mark, then you get a free ride at UConn. And so my parents are like, all right, you go do a year at uConn. We'll know you're in college. We'll figure out the rest from there and we'll buy you a car, which was like all 5000 bucks at the time. But love that car anyway, my little Ford Escort. So I did a year at UConn. And then I decided to transfer down to Sarah Lawrence. And it was at Sarah Lawrence that I, I had come out when I was at UConn, but it was a very I mean, it was a large college and there was a queer community there. But it was also still rural Connecticut and mostly Connecticut kids who'd all come from the same places. And I have only been there about a month before I decided it's like and I'm going to be transferring if I'm staying in school here before it finds more peers. Thank you very much. But I had a good time there. But yeah, but Sarah Lawrence was very much the point where I full-on embraced my queer identity and came out to everyone around me, as at that time bi. Pan wasn't really in broader use at that time. When I came across it, which was within the next couple of years, I began using both pan and omni to describe myself in terms of like either of these work really well, because this is, there are more than two people. I don't like that 2, that bi prefix. But, but at the time, bisexuality unto

Parents Ignored
Coming Out

UConn

Sarah Lawrence

Pan and Omni

itself was enough of a lift with the society that I was finding myself. Because, you know, At Sarah Lawrence, which was then and continues to be today, a very queer college. Even there the presumption was, oh, well, you know, the bisexuals, yeah, they don't need any representation. It's all about the gays, the lesbians, they're the really oppressed ones. And most of the political advocacy was based around like, we want marriage rights, we want less so about the serving in the military. But that was the other issue du jour was let us serve openly. And I was of the mindset of like, I don't want to marry anyone and I don't want to serve any fucking military. So what good is this? And y'all are just like erasing us from existence because it's like, oh my gosh, it has to be one or the other. So together with another student who I bumped into and who had also felt the same aspect of like, Wow, we are not white lesbians who think that everything is people who are born males fault and that's the limit of their feminism. So we don't fit in with the Queer Students Union as it is right now. It wasn't called the Queer Students Union and it was the LGBT, but, or the LGB. It was the LGB at that point. But I formed a group with this one with the student who was called Amy at that time, called the BLO, the Bisexual Liberation Organization, or "blow," as we call them ourselves, announced ourselves to the world by claiming a wall that was used for statements for the mural. It's "BLO ME" in giant letters. It was very punk rock, what can I say. But that was that was the center of of a lot of the friendships that I would make that would in some cases turn out to be friendships that I still maintained to this day with some of the core people in my life. And I mean, that was one of the points of awakening from my real political activism and identity. But. I should take a brief pause here, because I know that I do this with interviews and I'm running on my own steam and at my own pace, and you need to rein me in towards a question or anything at this point.

Ty: I'm loving hearing everything you have to say. I think it's all, you're making it very easy to interview you. You're answering a lot of questions on your own.

Rook: Thank you.

Ty: I do want to ask, I would love to hear a little bit more about your experiences at Sarah Lawrence. About like how that started your activism and about how that helped you in coming to terms with your identity or identities.

Rook: At this point in the larger moment, of course, AIDS was still very, very, very much of the moment. The very first protease inhibitors wouldn't start, wouldn't come out until over at least a couple of years further down the line. This was still in the realm of like, AZT, it'll kill ya, but it's better than dying of fungal infections, right? The decimation of every, it was like, it was presumed that everyone was infected.

No Bisexual Representation

Disagreements with Queer Groups on Campus about Priorities

Bisexual Liberation Organization "BLO"

Sarah Lawrence

AIDS

And bug chasers were a real thing. And that seems I think that's a little hard for people to get noticed. But there were people who quite literally were going around being like, Fuck you for asking me to wrap it. I don't care. I'm going to get it, sooner or later, we're all going to get it. We're going to go out fucking and sucking because that's what we do. And. We had just gotten a little bit more visibility in terms of the larger issue of gay rights in society. During the Clinton administration, the whole debate over, can we please serve openly?with the whole hedging and that ended up on Don't Ask, Don't Tell. And as I said, as pretty apparent from my dialog and my diatribe, I should say, I didn't believe in mainstream stuff. But I began to hear through the scenes that I was a part of, through music such as it was. Concerts were a big thing in terms of going to, you know, small shows and the spread the zine scene was a huge thing at that time. Internet wouldn't was very nascent at that point. You know, this is like the you go into the lab to get your access and you have to have an ed account usually to do so. So it was nothing like today, but there was a little bit of organization online, mostly through news boards and what have you. But I became aware of a little movement called Queer Nation, and I began to communicate with, with some of the folks who were involved there and reached out to them and went down for a couple of actions within the city. And what we were involved with at that time was mostly, we did a die-in that I was a part of where I was part of part of I'm usually where I was at that point because again, I'm large was like, okay, no, no, we know you're a great actor. We don't want you dying. We want you on crowd control to help with keeping people away who are hostile to the best extent that you can. So I did a lot of things like that. I did a lot of clinic escorting when I worked on the lines at abortion clinics at the time, very occurrent issue at the time, died off a little bit in the years since then. But I'm sure that that one turned out fine, right? Mm. Queer Nation was a very decentered organization, and I found that very thrilling in terms of it being like, Holy shit, this means I have just as much right to to proclaim what this movement is about as anyone else, which is a huge and heady thing for you or for someone as young as I am who was is full of energy as I was. And also frustrating because it was like a lot of leftist organizations that are decentered in that it couldn't get out of its own way if it tried to accomplish something. Uhm. And usually works well down to with its individual people organizing actions to make the call. And again, I was involved in a couple of the broader actions within the city at that time. We did some protests when John Paul the second came to the city, I wrote a long poem that I screamed at him in a public action. It was promptly lost into the sound of a crowd that no one really cared too much about. What's most difficult to convey about that age of activism, I think, is that just queerness alone was so transgressive at that point. I mean, it was the first time that. Like this one time I was walking out, out of, out of Times Square subway station with some friends. And there was one of these preachers was just going on strong. And the time I just said, you know, is really

Concerts, Zine Scene, Arts Activism

Queer Nation

Decentered Organization Struggles

visible because I had like a red Mohawk on top of being as tall as I am. And so, you know, picks me out of like the crowd is like, oh, there's a likely one like you there. Why do you dye your hair this way? You know, I just looked at my friend Matt, and pulled him in. The two of us just started making out in front of him and just to see the reaction of the crowd, which of course went nuts at that. It was like that power of like you could really fucking blow people's minds just by being queer to an extent that I don't think people really appreciate today. Oh. Yeah, it was very decentered and it was very focused on people. And in terms of what we were trying to accomplish, it comes down to we're trying to queer the entire fucking society. We're trying to make it so that your nice normal can't ever be nice and normal without including queerness all throughout it. Not that we want any part of the nice and normal for ourselves, although most of us ended up settling for some aspect of nice and normal in the end. But that was the basics of it. I mean, it when, it was during my time at Sarah Lawrence and I was being sort of hedgy around Amy, my co-founder of the group, because Amy would later come out, as Davim. Sort of a theme, are you noticing, in major relationships that I bring up here? Mm hmm. Yeah. Amy was then, was then, Amy would later be Davim, much later on. The two of us had had co-founded the group, and Amy had had hooked up with Angela fairly early on. The two of them had been a steady item and supposedly even, you know, hooked up together. And Angela was very was was a very important person in my life. Ultimately, I ended up marrying her. But dyed in the wool like I am lesbian. The first time I met and first time I've had the experience of like someone who is lesbian being okay and hooking up with me. Apparently I'm the exception. I don't know what that is. I also thought the two of you were in a monogamous. Okay, okay. You're reconsidering the monogamous, but you're still a lesbian. But I'm okay still. I'm not questioning it, I'm more trying to figure it out and also why I'm not reacting as much as I am. Wait a minute. What's going on here? At that time, I still didn't think of myself as femme. But that was more because I didn't think I had validity as femme, because I had a very deep streak of internalized transphobia towards the fact that I had a penis and that that had to make me male by default, right? I, however, had known for a long time that I didn't fit in with either side. And so I had started being like, I'm not a he that had finally first made , made an impression on me to be like, I am not a he and not a man. I, you can, call me, I look like one. I get that. And that was a big part of it for me. It was like, Yes, I get that I walk through the world in this skin and have lived experience of walking through the world, being this large, being apparently this way. I get it. But but but. And that was the point when I first started using metagender to describe myself.

Ty: And how old were you then?

Internalized
Transphobia

Metagender

Rook: I, that was my first year at Sarah Lawrence, that I first started using it, so I was 19 to 20 when I first started doing that. It was while I was 19 when I first started doing it. And 20 was the point where I really started to be like, No, seriously, y'all this is what I am. And I found to my amazement, to my amazement, one of my friends also stepped forward and was like, you know something? What you're saying really resonates with me and I think I'm metagender, too. And ironically, also AMAB and an inch taller than me. And I have no idea. I know that they still are. They are a fan of fascinating, fascinating person. Like went back way back for like two, three graduate degrees, ended up doing a doctoral. We had tension for decades and then like hooked up a few times. But it was also like too weird. Another major person in my life. But yeah, they're still writing under P. Sufenas. It is what is one of the nom de pleurs that they use. But yeah, got very involved in like, in, in the study of the religious aspects of it and started it a focus on Antinous was the the the Roman. No at any rate that's another wild tangent but.

Ty: Can you define what metagender like meant to you at that time and how you described it?

Rook: At the time? The idea of what it was was I'm not within the binary, I'm outside the binary. Now I'd heard the term genderqueer and I adopted that one as well. I'm like, yes, I'm genderqueer. But metagender was like a better way of for me of being like I am I choose meta because it's like I'm beyond gender, right? Twee I know I always I, I came up with the term I can define myself as being twee in the way that I came at it. But, and so I started asking for, I thought that the simplest solution would be ask for e pronouns be like not a he, not a she just dropped all of it and just give me an E like e, em, ers. Yeah. Went nowhere, went nowhere went nowhere. Even even at a place like Sarah Lawrence where people were fully into it, it was like, Yeah, yeah. You want a little more attention? Sure. So I very quickly got that I wasn't going to get anywhere on this. I really wanted to beat myself bloody doing it. And so. I just stopped mentioning it as much until I barely mentioned it at all, until the subject of gender came up. And sometimes I would have a long rant about gender or what have you. But, but yeah, in the beginning at that point, I was hopeful to be like, Come on, isn't there space for something outside the binary? And what I was looking for was very much what would come much further down the pike in terms of like, hey, what about the term nonbinary? Want to use that one? And I might have been a bit ahead of the curve, but I mean, this was a while, though, this was still in there of like Pat Califia was still Pat wasn't Patrick yet was still just Pat, you know. But that was also the time when I began to consider transness for the first time with myself. And what I discovered was I had a scarcity mindset towards it. See, I had been, I'd been performing in drag for a long time by that point. And I mean, I did go on to Rocky

Metagender
Definition

Neopronouns

Rocky Horror

Horror quite a bit. And that was at that time one of the few ways in which was like, Hey, I'm a performer, I can do Rocky Horror, and of course I can do all these roles. And this is a kind of a celebration of queerness. And I can go out and do this. And why do I feel slightly more fulfilled when I'm in Frank mode than at other times. Probably best not to carry on, just keep doing theater. It'll take care of itself sooner or later, right? What I discovered was, when I really considered physical transition and I did begin to consider it, I began to consider it because I would look at people like Genesis P-Orridge where I'm like, Wait a minute, they, they are transitioning and they're non-binary. Oh, but they have a partner and there's so much. Look how much older they are, how much longer they've been around. It was scarcity mindset, and that's almost impossible to get across the degree to which that was different at the time. And I get people still do that and people still have a scarcity mindset towards it. Like there's a certain number amount of estrogen and testosterone in the world, folks we're going to run out if you get it. But it was compounded by realities around me that were a lot stronger. I mean, at that time, not that I looked into it as an egg. At that time, there wasn't really WPATH recommendation. It was illegal in a lot places to physically transition. Hence why most people talked about going abroad to transition. You know, the broadest thing that was put out there in the culture as a whole, here's another reason to hate this movie, The Silence of the Lambs. Okay, so a lot of the trans folks who saw that when it came out in '91 were like, okay, what are those three places? There are three major centers in the US where there is a reassignment. Okay, this one, this one and this one. So I got to go to one of those three places right. But it really was almost quite that limited at the time that Thomas Harris wrote that even though that cis asshole really or no, I have a whole thing, a one person show about that. I reenact portions of that for my own amusement, but. Scarcity. Scarcity was a real mindset. Why do you think the idea of a trans woman, the killer who's not really trans, of course, because they're passive, would kill women to take their skins to transition? Why would this be plausible? Well, that was kind of the world we were in. There was no path for doing so unless you literally went into it with the teeth, with, you know, teeth bared, willing to be like, I'm going to go out into the world and I'm going to present however I can present. And my only models with that. With other transgender books. I never saw so many as big as I was. I always looked at myself and I said, No, I'll never fool anyone. You have to fool people, right? That's what this is about. That's the only way that you could do that. And so that's not really me anyway. What are you doing? You're not valid. You're just this thing thinks it's one thing and is not the other. Just why can't you just do things the normal way? Self-hatred in cycles.

Denial

Scarcity Mindset

Silence of the Lambs

Scarcity Mindset

Gender Euphoria

Ty: On a little bit of a happier note, I feel like you've kind of touched on this a little bit, but I'd love to know some things that bring you gender euphoria now and that have as you've been existing.

Rook: Oh, wow. The euphoria portion of it. I mean, I find euphoria on all kinds of levels, but I mean, on the base level of what I couldn't conceive of at that age, which I think is probably the most valuable portion of an answer to that question when compared with what I just said. Is just pure euphoria and being accepted for who I am. The baseline level of being given my pronouns and my name and being given my gender, that is still the thing that is beyond itself. One of those things where it's like, Yeah, I can get used to it, but I can get excited about the fact of like, you know. You see that you're used to that, isn't that amazing, honey? It's that euphoria can be anywhere I want to find it. And I mean, I try and embrace my euphoria. I find it in my expression. I'm very, very flamboyant in how I move through the world. I'm very much of a I am, a take me as you find me kind of person because I am what I am. I still find joy in. I still find joy in performance. I find joy in creation. I find joy in community and in sharing with my sibs and finding simpatico and in finding people where it's like, wow so different from my own experiences but you're still my sib. I see the similarities. You know I. But the only thing that I haven't experienced the euphoria yet in is the physical side. Which. But. That's okay. I intimidate people. I'm perfectly well aware of that at this point. Besides, it's like if you said if you plan to gender transition from male to female in middle age and expect to get laid quite a bit, you're in for a shocker, I find. It's like, oh, yeah, yeah choose to become a middle aged woman. See what that gets you.

Ty: What has your experiences with like love and sex been in your life since coming out and before then?

Rook: I mean, love is separate from sex and a lot of levels, of course. But I mean, in terms of being in love and embracing love and my sexuality, I've had a very long and complex path with things. As I said, I talked about two people about Amy and Angela. Of the fact that the two them had been a couple most of my time in college. Well, a month before we were, I was going to graduate, I hooked up with both of them. And for the first time, see had been doing the poly slut thing all throughout of my undergrad. And I was in heaven as far as I'd, I'd figure out. It's like, I love this. I love having sex with multiple people. I love group sex in particular I find it is a dynamic that appeals to me and a lot of levels. And so I'd slutted my way through undergrad. I loved it, I embraced it, I fell in with it. And I'd. And then, yeah, as a as I said it, Angela and I had developed this odd thing where it was like we were adversarial, that she was a lesbian. I was ostensibly a man, but then we would both

Respected Identity

Embracing Expression

Transitioning Middle-Aged

Love and Sex

Poly

get drunk and hook up together. Amy and I had had this, you know, we had had like both been carrying the torch for each other in different ways. But then there had been the Angela thing, and then there had been the two of us being awkward. But yeah, we all ended up hooking up together and that was lovely while it was there. But poly is not easy. I didn't know how to handle any forms of relationships. I was still deeply traumatized. I was years before receiving any kind of psychiatric treatment. I was very much of the mindset of like, there is nothing wrong with me. I'm the sanest fucking person you will ever find. And I was very afraid of any kind of psychiatric intervention. And believed, of course, that what was going on with me was so beyond the capability of anyone else. Nah man, you don't get me. And throughout this time and I've mentioned this once before, but it is relevant because it comes from that background with Shadow, who was my assailant in that interval in in my teenage years. The end is nigh. The end is nigh. The end is nigh. So. I graduate and I have no idea what I'm doing. I move out to L.A. because a boy I'd been saying was like, here, you can stay with me, with my mom while, while you figure out something in L.A.. And so we tried that, lived there long enough to figure out, okay, I can't I can't live with Colin. He's got problems of his own. We're both drunks, which doesn't help. I have no idea what I'm doing. My life. I want the idea. I said, yeah, I want to be a performer, but I have no idea how to get along with the people who are in Los Angeles to do so. Ended up working in like these odd jobs. Like I worked as a phone sex operator. I went in for a job as a phone sex operator to this little nondescript, you know, mini, like, like, you know, business park type place in the San Fernando Valley. Inside, it looks like any kind of CSR farm where, you know, people are on the phones, in their headsets talking and I've got a bosso voice. (deeper voice) And, you know, at that time I would tend to mask by talking down here, of course, and I'm queer. (back to normal voice) So I figure, yeah, I'd go into the gay department. Except that I mentioned, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm an actor and they're like, oh, can you do voices? I'm like, yes, let's send you to department 141. Now, the way this place was set up, there was like about five different departments, which were women for men, one department with guys for guys, and then department 141, which was the catchall of like domination primarily, but any kind of fetish stuff where you had to like. And the way it worked was like it was a catchall for all these different ads that were just feeding into this different place. And it would be like a tone in your ear when you got a call and there would be like a brief tone with someone coming on saying "domination". And then the one was stuck in my, my, my mind forever. Of course, this is a T S TV call, which is where I started being like. Hey, I actually can develop the (higher in pitch) higher end of my voice. (back to normal voice) And where I discovered, of course, I had that capacity to do that. But yeah, that was my first job out as an undergrad. Worked as a courier, and after a couple of months I came back east and I was just sort of wandering around lost for a lot of that period. I

L.A.

Alcoholism

Phone Sex Operator

Back East

Pregnancy

had been. And I'd, we'd, I'd hooked up with Angela and Amy again. Angela ended up pregnant. And the, the end of that ended with Amy leaving the relationship and casting the two of us as we pushed him out, even though, well, even, you know, getting into it doesn't really matter too much at that point. But the two of us had kind of a it's us against the world mentality. And we were, we were going around about. We ended up getting an abortion and then she had gotten pregnant again. We get, we end up getting another abortion. Both of which were traumatizing for both of us, even though we were both of the mindset of, yeah, we cannot have a kid. But yeah, it didn't make it any easier. Not that it taught us to take better precautions, of course, as it happened twice. A lot of hook ups throughout this period, but also just a lot of spinning out. I ended up, you know, she went back to back to college to finish up her degree. And I was working in a bookstore in, it, for a while and in Connecticut for a period. Then we end up with a whole bunch of us, including some friends. We had this idea of like, well, it started off with a good friend of mine who I had become friends with after high school, another person who later turned out to be nonbinary as well. Yeah, my friend Rose, loved them, loved the, had come up with the idea of like, hey, let's all move down to New Orleans. And at this point, I had Angela and I had just hooked up with another couple, Walton and Sierra. All of us were bi. All of us were together. All of us were in love or in lust or something, and definitely high and drunk as we did it. And so we all moved down to New Orleans the summer of '98 and ended up crashing eight of us in a little shotgun apartment on Port Street in the in the Lower Ninth Ward. This was years before Katrina, of course, but it was like it was close enough to, you know, the Faubourg Marigny and the Decatur, you know, the French Quarter. We can, we can walk into the French Quarter and work there and then come out, out and, you know, live in this incredibly cheap place to live, live and basically make our, our ways as we are. And so I started earning my living. First of all, one of my things was I was a tarot card reader. And so I set up a table right in Jackson Square, and I did tarot card readings during the night. But then I then Sierra got a job stripping and I'm like, wait a minute, I could strip, couldn't I. And so that was my first experience working in the sex industry, was there was a club called The Unisex, which was the only club on Bourbon Street that had both men and women. At that time. I was billed as the former, even though I would ultimately turn out to be more of the latter, of course. I would sometimes go out to other clubs, you know, on the gay side of things and try and make a little money. But problem was, I wasn't very attractive to gay boys. I was a large, gangly, rather hairy on top of that, not, you know, cute twinkly muscle bound, cleft jaw, gym, gym, body type guy. That, you know. But I made my way. That was my first contact with the sex industry and that was my first time being paid to have sex with someone at various points throughout there. And that was interesting. First time doing porn was during that period. That would become even more of a theme later on. I was no better at relationships with

Abortion

New Orleans

Stripping

Porn

other people than I was with relationships with my own self in terms of self-deception. And I was a very traumatized person who had no idea how to relate to people still in a lot of ways, which is to say that my relationships were volatile, to say the least. There was all kinds of sturm und drang, and the four of us, we toured around the country for a while after we left New Orleans, but the end shot of it was that Angela and I thought it would be a bright idea when we were passing through Las Vegas to get married. Because we're like, fuck it, you know, we've been with each other so far. It'll be a legal protection, what have you. And of course, it didn't end up fixing any of the many and various issues that we'd gone through up to that point. We were still mostly screaming at each other as our means of communication. End up back east for a brief period. I was working in a couple of performance gigs back in Hartford, Angela graduates from Sarah Lawrence and graduated in just like a semester late in the end. And the two of us go out to Los Angeles for a bit. And the idea out there is I had just done an audition and had gotten accepted into the MFA program at CalArts, and so I was going to go to grad school and I was going to be an actor. And Angela got it in her mind that she was going to be a porn star. And so we got out to Los Angeles. I was not able to find any real work. And so both of us ended up doing a little bit of that. She was much more in demand than I was being AFAB, although we did some fetish type work together and at that time this is like '99 into 2000, there was like rudimentary what we know cam girl type stuff was out there at that time. And so we began doing that to a certain extent. She adopted a porn name and got, did her did her medical card. And, you know, we lived in the valley and for a little while that was our life. I would go back and, no, we were sharing the vehicle at that time. So yeah, oftentimes it was like she would give me a lift in the car up to Valencia where I would go and be in conservatory being an actor. And yeah, and she would go to be a porn actor.

Back East

Los Angeles

CalArts

Ty: And what ultimately brought you back to Maine?

Rook: To Maine? Well, as Maine was for so far in my future at that point, this is this was my biggest worry with this was that Maine itself. Maine is kind of where I ended up at the end. And it's a big plot twist, right? no one saw that coming. And it's 7:30 already, oh my god. The long and short of that is. The marriage fell to pieces. We didn't know how to do poly other than bad poly and I had had during my experience at CalArts, I'd had my first brush of moment of like, Wait a minute. I think I really do want to transition. I just don't know if I can, if I have what it's going to take internally to do that. In terms of like that was a period when I was like, I'm having my entire body waxed took like 4 or 5 hours. But it was worth it for me, even though it would be like I would be like completely out of it. Just like I don't even know what's happening from the blood rushing to my skin afterwards. But I also had a few

Maine

Divorce, Bad Poly

Desire to
Transition

experiences really acting as another gender, like was put to me by one of my acting professors and I ultimately was asked not to continue conservatory. And the biggest criticism said, that I was able to ultimately take from it. What are you holding in? Why are you holding it? What are you holding onto? But between those two things, between leaving conservatory and the end of my marriage, I was somewhat at wit's end. I worked on a political campaign during that time. It was about in 2000 and the presidential campaign was heating up. And I had never been a Democrat per se. I had always been like, I am so far to the left, you don't even know what I am. You know, that had been my politics. But I'd also recognized for a long time, I'm like, Yeah, there's two parties in this country, and apparently I'm stuck with one of them if I'm going to get shit done. And George W Bush scared the shit out of me. Oh, my sweet summer child. Right. Yeah. Yeah. How could we ever have a worse president than George W Bush? Right. Oh, my God, what could ever happen? so I ended up going to work for the Gore campaign, and I went where I was needed. I went to Nevada. You know, I've been living in Los Angeles, so it was fairly close. And Nevada was very, it was at the beginning of being considered a swing state then. So I went there and I worked as a liaison to the LGBT community. I, I had a thing where I would go out to the bars to register queer voters. And my usual shtick was I would wear a mini skirt and fishnets and a leather vest with no shirt on underneath. And I would write in mascara on my chest, "no Bush" with an arrow pointing down. it was very successful as a means of getting people registered. But I also worked with the Reid machine. I put my. My acting skills to. To work in other areas. With that, I played the Yucca man, which was it had to do with the Yucca mountain depository. Yucca man was just sort of a media figure, but it was like they were using my height. So it's like, here, here's a radiation suit, here's a giant, giant barrel that we'll throw full of this. You just show up to this Republican senator who wants to vote in favor of the repository and scare the shit out of people and things like that. That brings us to 22 years back when I was 25 years old and I've been rambling for a long time and I need a smoke anyway. Can we call a, call a pause for a moment? Is that okay, Ty?

Ty: Do you want to try to plan another time? It seems like there's still a lot you have to say.

Rook: There's quite a bit and I will go by, by you as my transcribe here. As, as you're my amanuensis, I will leave it to you in terms of whether you want me to call a pause and resume with the second half or whether it's better to to have it there fresh. I know that I'm very inchoate and kind of throw salad at the walls and they're like, That's incoherent or is it? So whichever way you prefer, dear. If you think it would be easier to call a break for the night and do this again another time? I'm all in favor.

Leaving
Conservatory

Gore Campaign,
Political Activism

Nevada

Ending Interview

Ty: All right. Yeah, I think that that would probably be the best way that we could do it. But do you want to do you have anything you want to say at the end? Do you have any, like, last words for this part?

Rook: Well. It's interesting. Trying to parse it out because it is the story of any life. You're trying to make it about several things and several themes. And there's always the major themes that you draw together in your life that didn't get enough attention. But again, with with my story, the way that it fell out, I will touch on certain things like addiction and relationships and even further in the next session as we go forward with it. But that's at least giving my historical context. And we're almost at the point where it's like, So how the hell did you end up in Maine? It's like, it's another, uh-buh-buh-buh, decade or so. You can hold on that long, can't you? We'll get there, it happens. Yeah. When would you, when would work for you, Ty. In terms of getting out.

Ty: I will reach out to Wendy and we can see what would work. If it would be something that you and I would be able to do again, or if it would be something that the next student would have to do. Personally, I'm very much hoping that I get to hear the rest of your story. I'm very interested. I have so many more questions for you.

Rook: Thank you, dear, thank you. I'm happy to continue with you. I'm actually I. I worked a solid week, so I have all of this upcoming week off. If there's anything within there.

Ty: Um, yeah.

Rook: I don't have a reason to be in Portland for once, but I can make a reason to do so as I did tonight.

Ty: Yeah.

Rook: And then. And yeah, after that, I will be back in my regular work schedule, which means that most, most days I'm down here in Portland anyway.

Ty: Okay. Yeah. So I will send you an electronic copy of this interview and I'll send you the transcribed interview as soon as we have it. I'm going to say thank you right now for doing this with me. I really appreciate it.

Scheduling 2nd Interview

Thank you's

Rook: Oh, my goodness. Yeah, you, you affirmed that I'm a world class babbler. My goodness. But it's 25 years. I can forget that I have a long life at this point and legitimately a fair amount of shit happened into it, most of which is relevant for an interview about queerness.